

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Tokumoto. Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 3-7 without prejudice or disclaimer and without addressing the merits of the Examiner's rejection. The cancellation of these claims therefore renders the Examiner's rejection moot.

Claims 2, 8 and 9-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanselman. However, claims 9-11 were also indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of any base claim as well as any intervening claims. It is therefore noted that the Examiner's position with respect to claims 9-11 is inconsistent, as a claim cannot be concurrently both rejected and objected to.

In a telephone conversation with the Examiner on January 19, 2005, the undersigned confirmed with the Examiner that claims 2, 8 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanselman, and that claims 9-11, which depended from independent claim 2, were objected to. Applicants have canceled claims 2, 8 and 12 without prejudice or disclaimer and without addressing the merits of the Examiner's rejection. The cancellation of these claims therefore renders the Examiner's rejection of claims 2, 8 and 12 moot. The indication of allowable subject matter in claims 9-11 is noted and appreciated.

With regard to claims 9-11, claims 9-11 have been amended into independent form to each include the limitations of base claim 2, now canceled. Therefore, claims 9-11 are now in allowable form.

New claims 13-15, which respectively depend from amended independent claims 9-11 and which correspond generally to canceled claim 12, have been added.

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In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen additional fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'DGP', written over a horizontal line.

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